



The Indiana Department of Workforce Development serves the public with accessibility in mind

After a global pandemic drove the newly unemployed to online resources at unprecedented rates, it put a spotlight on the human side of getting information to those in need and looking for answers.

Customer: The Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Customer Website: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/>

Industry: Government

Organization Size: 1,200

Country: USA

Partner: Atlassian

Partner Website: <https://www.Atlassian.com/>

Executive summary

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD) is a government agency that helps the citizens of Indiana find new jobs, advance in their careers, and receive unemployment benefits.

As layoffs caused by the pandemic rose in the spring of 2020, thousands of people who had never lost a job before were suddenly trying to navigate the IDWD system for the first time, causing a steep increase in inquiries. By implementing PingPilot's chat, SMS, and email signals on the website, the department was able to more efficiently handle incoming queries and direct people to the assistance they needed, even while its own staff of 1,200 was working from home.

Rick Bedel, the deputy IT director for the department, saw the effect of the volume surge. "Previously we had two web servers," Bedel says. "We currently are running on 16 web servers just to keep up with all the extra traffic."

All of that web traffic represented people in great difficulty. The state government was determined to provide simple access to services for everyone who needed help. The agency was tasked with adding virtual delivery of services

to help more people, faster. Bedel says, "We were exploring all possibilities." Several directors in the agency felt that adding a chat option would help connect with citizens more efficiently. Bedel identified PingPilot's Click-to-Human™ capabilities as a solution that fit exactly what he was looking for.



Chat empowers the department

The IDWD formed a new internal task force just to handle incoming citizen questions on the workforce side.

However, with only three people in this group, they needed a force multiplier. “With chat, you can handle multiple interactions at once,” Bedel says. He began looking for chat solutions that would integrate with Jira Service Management and found PingPilot.

He says the setup was remarkably easy, taking less than a day to go from internal dev testing to going live on the public-facing website. “You insert a little JavaScript, and it goes right into the queue,” he says.

It was just as simple to get the agents up and running with it, too. Even with the team working remotely, everyone learned the system quickly. “Within about 30 minutes, they were answering questions in the real world,” Bedel recalls. The agents were immediately able to connect people to the many apps, websites, and phone numbers

the state offers for career development and unemployment assistance.

Bedel says the PingPilot team has been immediately responsive to requests, like a tweak to the initial user authentication. And although the PingPilot team is always reachable, he hasn’t had much need for support. “It takes care of itself; it just works,” Bedel says.



SMS support gives citizens another option

Within several months of setting up chat, the agency added SMS to their PingPilot signals to give citizens another option for accessing the information they needed. Particularly with people out of work, not everyone has reliable access to a home computer. SMS wasn't a method of contact the department had used before. The agents were wary about the novel addition, but after a quick demonstration, they saw that using SMS was the same back-end experience for them.

The department's website automatically recognizes when users are accessing it from a mobile device and provides a one-click option

to make contact via SMS. Soon after standing up the mobile option, about 20 percent of the queries were coming in through SMS.

Looking ahead, the department may consider adding a voice signal on PingPilot, too, to keep all communication on a single system. While the nature of the calls currently doesn't require tracking repeat callers, it is something the system could do if the use case shifts. Meanwhile, the system continues to help the IDWD support the citizens of Indiana through a difficult time.

“It's just easy,” Bedel says. “It does exactly what we need.”

Learn more about how PingPilot can help your company build more human connections.